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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 28 | Min
Fog/mist in the morning and partly cloudy sky later
Sensex 77,339 | Nifty 23,453 | Gold 76,310 | Dollar 84.39 | Euro 88.83 | GBP 106.62

CITY PAGE 5

Census chaos Non-consecutive numbering, shrubs identified as trees and other loopholes raise questions on credibility of tree census

Teen spirit Experts list out causes that have driven rise in addiction to substances, gaming, digital devices among Gen Z

CITY PAGE 7

With BMTC buses not stopping at designated stops, passengers, especially the disabled, face increasing challenges to board them; drivers speak of multiple hurdles for them to make the exact halt

HALT, WHO GOES THERE?

Bus lanes that were discontinued in 2022 most effective solution

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Tensions are escalating between Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) drivers and passengers as the latter complain about buses not halting at the designated stops. Buses stopping away from stops has created significant challenges for passengers with disabilities, who rely heavily on public transport for their mobility.

Many passengers voiced their frustrations, stating that the inconsistency severely hampers their ability to board the bus. Passengers have described feeling abandoned and unsafe, particularly when buses do not stop at designated areas.

A visually impaired commuter told BM, " Buses don't stop precisely at the bus stops, and when they halt away from the curb, it's difficult for us to locate the door and climb on safely. Missing that bus means waiting a long time for the next one."

A few weeks ago, a user on X tagged BMTC Bengaluru, questioning, "Where exactly are BMTC buses supposed to stop to pick up passengers? On the right side of the road?"

"BMTC buses often stop in the middle of the road to pick up or drop off passengers," a frustrated commuter remarked. "These drivers

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

INSIDE» PG 3 Rage on the bus

"Private vehicles are often parked near bus stops, which forces us to stop either before or after the designated spot. In heavy traffic, vehicles pile up near bus stops, leaving us no choice but to halt wherever we can find space
— Bus driver

Done & dusted

BBMP plans to deploy smaller sweeping machines to remove dust in commercial areas, markets, busy zones

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Pollution levels in Bengaluru are rising not only due to vehicle emissions, but also dust from road work, building construction, and other related activities. The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike uses huge mechanical sweeping machines, but these are not so efficient. To overcome this, BBMP has now decided to deploy smaller mechanised cleaning machines to reduce dust on secondary roads as well.

Metro construction, flyovers, drainage work, road development, asphalting, white-topping, and building projects have significantly contributed to dust accumulation, causing daily challenges for local residents and commuters. While sanitation workers handle garbage collection, dust is often left behind.

Cost estimate of Rs 5.8 crore

An official said, "The dust collected along median strips due to heavy vehicular traffic has not been

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

3 THINGS TO DO

01 Abstract art showcase

Explore 'Chromatic Rhythms,' a solo exhibition of paintings by renowned abstract artist Prabhakar Kolte. He is a master of abstraction, whose works speak through vibrant, rhythmic layers of colour and texture. His work transcends the boundaries of representation, drawing viewers into a contemplative journey of discovery. His abstract works reveal a deep sense of contemplation, likened to gazing through a window that frames the infinite meditations of nature. **Where: Gallery G, 38 Lavelle Road; When: Until November 22, 10 am to 6 pm**

02 Cooking in space

It's the biggest cooking show in the galaxy, and Saras is determined to win it.
A feast for your brain, heart and soul.
Samit Basu
INTERSTELLAR
MEGACHEF
FLAVOUR HACKER BOOK ONE
LAVANYA
LAKSHMINARAYAN

Tune into a conversation between Lavanya Lakshminarayan and Shrabonti Bagchi as they discuss Lavanya's latest science-fiction novel, 'INTERSTELLAR MEGACHEF.' Shrabonti Bagchi is a journalist and reviewer. Interstellar MegaChef is the showcase of the planet Primus's austere, carefully synthesised cuisine. **Where: Champaca Bookstore; When: November 23, 5 pm**

03 Poetry party

Listen to some amazing poems by five of Bengaluru's most talented poets in a special edition of 'Tuesdays with the Bard@Urban Solace.' Rohini Malur is a poet, writer, and tarot card reader. Lolo's talents span poetry, illustration, etc, all grounded in her advocacy for body positivity. Saranya Francis is an award-winning author, educator, and voice for women's rights. Soumya Ramasamy finds her true voice in storytelling and poetry. Alokparna's poems explore whether, amid life's highs and lows, our inner core can truly stay intact. **Where: Urban Solace**
When: November 19, 7:30 pm to 9 pm

A tribute to great poet

Folk artistes perform during Kanakadasa Jayanthi celebrations in Bengaluru on Monday

Child welfare initiatives gain traction in legislative circles

Elected representatives raise 495 child-centric questions in state assembly sessions, ranging from child rights violations to need for better infrastructure, nutrition, food for children

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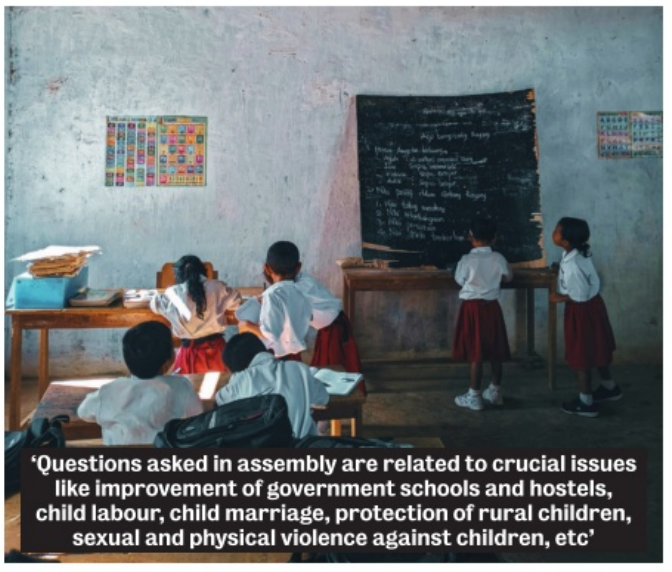
Child rights activists are pleased that an increasing number of elected representatives' are raising child welfare related concerns in Assembly sessions. Dr Vasudeva Sharma NV, Karnataka Child Rights Observatory (KCRO) State Convener, said that he believes that these questions and the responses from the government make the children's lives better in many aspects.

Since 2005, the KCRO, in collaboration with UNICEF, has been analysing the questions raised by legislators on the rights of children in the legislative sessions and the answers given by the concerned departments for those questions. The report, published every year, highlights the total questions, child-centric questions, and 10 legislators who have raised the most number of child-centric questions. It is shared with legislators, child rights activists, officials, universities, etc. So far, four sessions have been held after the 2023 Karnataka general assembly elections.

Topics discussed

"...These questions are related to important issues like improvement of government schools and hostels, child labour and child marriage, protection of rural children, sexual and physical violence against children, prevention of malnutrition, demanding for mother and child hospitals, distribution of scholarships, etc,' said Sharma, adding that apart from 10 legislators, several other legislators from both houses have voiced in favour of children, which is appreciable. "While demanding more child rights issues be discussed in the assembly, we appreciate the concerns of the legislators about children."



'Questions asked in assembly are related to crucial issues like improvement of government schools and hostels, child labour, child marriage, protection of rural children, sexual and physical violence against children, etc'

Demands raised by MLA's in assembly

The report states that the State Assembly session was held for 44 days between February 2023 and July 2024, and 495 child-centric queries were asked during the Assembly sessions. Among the 10 legislators, Haris NA, a Congress MLA from Shanthinagar, raised 13 queries, drawing the government's attention towards the incidents of child rights violations in the state. He urged for suitable schemes for comprehensive development of schools and anganwadi centres and adequate supply of uniforms to children. He demanded the government provide special educational facilities to the children of farmers and agricultural labourers.

Samruddhi V Manjunath JD(S) MLA from Mulbagal, Kolar, UB Banakar, Congress MLA from Hirekerur, and Puttaswamy Gowda KH, an independent MLA from Gowribidanur, raised a total of 10 child-centric questions each in these sessions. Manjunath demanded that the government renovate the government schools instead of closing them. He noted the extent of existing child labour in the state and demanded protection, nutrition, and education for the children. Banakar demanded effective implementation of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, in the state and providing quality care and education to the children in the boys and girls hostels. Gowda demanded basic amenities such as clean drinking water units, toilet facilities, and the construction of additional class rooms for schools in his constituency.

Mahantesh Koujalagi, Congress MLA representing Bailahongala constituency, and Gurme Suresh Shetty, BJP MLA from Kapu constituency, raised nine child-centric questions each. Koujalagi urged the government to open Karnataka public schools and government high schools in his constituency. Shetty highlighted the lack of facilities in schools and anganwadis and demanded the government ensure proper supply of nutritious food in schools and anganwadis.

Yeshwanthrayagowda Patil, Congress MLA from Indi constituency, Krishna Naik K, BJP MLA representing Hadagali constituency, Balakrishna CN, JD(S) MLA from Shravanabelagola, and Suresh Gowda B, BJP MLA representing Tumakuru Rural constituency, raised eight child-centric questions each during these sessions. Nagasimha G Rao of the Child Rights Trust appreciated all elected representatives showing their concern for children's welfare and said that he would like them to raise further queries related to migrated children.

Jarring note: Conductor abuses and attacks disabled passenger

Man asks conductor to replace soiled note, sparking violent reaction; inquiry on Tuesday

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Even as the incidents of passengers attacking Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) conductors are on the rise, a shocking incident of brutality has come to light where a disabled passenger was attacked by a conductor. A BMTC conductor is accused of roughing up a person with disability for asking him to give the right currency note (Rs 20) instead of a soiled note.

The incident took place on November 6. Sunil Kumar Sharma, a person with disability, boarded a BMTC bus and was commuting from Kasturinagar Ring Road to Mahadevapura Ring Road. The bus fare was Rs 10. Sharma gave the conductor a Rs 50 note. The conductor issued the ticket and returned two Rs 20 notes. Sharma found one of the Rs 20 notes was soiled.

"I asked the conductor to take back the soiled Rs 20 note and give me another note. The conductor not only refused to do that but also started abusing me. I alighted from the bus at the destination. The conductor also got down and began manhandling me," Sharma said.

Fights usually break out over change remaining after bus fare

He said the words used by the conductor pained him. "I complained to a Special Officer on Duty at the Chief Minister's Office through social media. I am grateful to the OSD at the Chief Minister's Office for forwarding my complaint to the BMTC Chief Traffic Manager (Operations). The BMTC officials asked me to appear for an inquiry on Tuesday. I am expecting justice for me during the inquiry," he said.

The BMTC Chief Traffic Manager (Operations), in a letter dated November 14, informed the Officer on Special Duty at the Chief Minister's Office about the measures taken on the complaint by Sharma. "We have contacted the complainant on November 6 and got more information on the incident. We regret the inconvenience caused. We have directed the security department to check the CCTV footage and submit a report. We advised Sunil Kumar Sharma to attend the inquiry on November 16. Suitable action will be taken after conducting the inquiry," the letter read.

> **When, I alighted at my destination, the conductor also got down and began manhandling me**
>
> –Sunil Kumar Sharma

It is learnt that the inquiry scheduled for November 16 did not take place as the BMTC Chief Traffic Manager (Operations) was held up with some work. "We will inform you about the action taken after conducting the inquiry on Tuesday," the BMTC Chief Traffic Manager (Operations) said.

Vinay Srinivas, a member of Bengaluru Bus Prayanikara Vedike, said the operation of BMTC buses is neither benefitting conductors and drivers nor the commuters. "Most of the conductors and drivers are in stress due to various reasons. The commuters are also facing problems due to poor maintenance of the buses. The incidents of spat over returning the remaining change to the commuters have been on the rise. The authorities concerned are not printing sufficient numbers of currency notes of Rs 10 or Rs 20 denominations," said Srinivas.

He also condemned the conductor's violent reaction.

2 held for attempted rape of minor

Two men were arrested by the Hebbagodi police for allegedly attempting to rape a minor girl from their neighbourhood. The accused, identified as Srikanth and Vijay, are said to have lured the girl to a nearby temple under the pretext of giving her chocolates.

According to the police complaint filed by the girl's mother, the accused took advantage of the girl's innocence and attempted to assault her. However, the girl's screams alerted people in the temple premises, forcing the accused to flee the scene.

The traumatised girl returned home and informed her mother about the ordeal. —BMB

Boy falls to death from 7th floor flat

A 16-year-old boy reportedly fell to his death from the 7th floor of the Mantri Splendour apartment complex in Geddalahalli during the early hours of Saturday.

The fall is suspected to have occurred between 1.30 am and 5 am, although the exact details remain unclear. A police official mentioned that the likely cause could be related to the boy not being selected during his cricket trials. The body was discovered by residents, who immediately alerted the authorities. The identity and details of the deceased are yet to be disclosed. —BMB

Now, ambulance facility for walkers in Lalbagh

In a first, Lalbagh Walkers' Association has launched ambulance facility for morning walkers from 6 am to 10 am

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File photo of walkers at Lalbagh; inset: The ambulance launched by Lalbagh Walkers' Association

Lalbagh Walkers' Association is at the forefront when it comes to welfare of their walkers. The walkers' association became a role model by introducing an ambulance vehicle facility for the benefit of people who visit Lalbagh for a walk in the morning.

"We have launched an ambulance facility for the benefit of people who visit Lalbagh in the morning for a walk. We have made arrangements to keep two ambulance vehicles at gate no 2 and the west gate. This arrangement is made in association with a private hospital. The ambulance vehicles are available from 6 am to 10 am on a daily basis," said Mavalli Krishna, president, Lalbagh Walkers' Association.

Krishna pointed out that the ambulance vehicle services have been a great help for people, especially senior citizens, who come to Lalbagh for a walk. "Three walkers have already availed of the ambulance service from November 1. One of the walkers met with an accident. She was admitted to a hospital of her choice," he said.

Additionally, coming down heavily on the hike in entry fees to Lalbagh, he said that it would be a burden on people from lower and middle-class families. "The horticulture department has hiked the entry fees from Rs 30 to Rs 50 for adults. If a grandfather from a middle-class or lower-middle-class family wants to take his grandson to Lalbagh, he has to pay Rs 80 (Rs 50 for him and Rs 30 for his grandson). We have submitted a memorandum to the authorities to roll back the hike in entry fees," he said.

Lalbagh Walkers' Association, apart from organising cultural programmes, including Kannada Rajyotsava, arranges medical camps for the benefit of walkers.

Stating that members of the walkers' association have been creating awareness among the people on the importance of keeping Lalbagh clean and neat, Munikrishna M, general secretary, Lalbagh Walkers' Association, said the ambulance facility has been a great help for walkers. "Many people visit Lalbagh for a walk in the morning. Some of them may require medical facilities. Ambulance facility is a great help for such people. It will help them to reach hospitals on time," said Munikrishna, adding that the ambulance service is available free of cost.

Green Army Force founder president DS Kirankumar said the horticulture department officials have to pull up socks to ensure cleanliness at Lalbagh. "I am of the opinion that the horticulture department officials are interested in collecting the entry fees. They are not bothered to strengthen security to prevent people from carrying single-use plastic into Lalbagh. The officials have to ensure the functioning of RO plants and keep restrooms neat and clean," said Kirankumar, adding that dos and don'ts remain on the boards at Lalbagh and the visitors are carrying plastic covers without any hurdles.

Memo for budgetary support to protect Doddakallasandra Lake

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The Doddakallasandra Lake Protection Committee (DLPT), comprising local residents and environmentally conscious citizens, has urged the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to allocate specific resources for the conservation and maintenance of the lake in the 2025-26 budget. The group submitted a detailed memorandum advocating for a participatory "ground-up budgeting" approach, inspired by Panchayat Raj processes, to address pressing ecological concerns.

Doddakallasandra Lake has long been recognised for its rich biodiversity. Recent data from eBird reveals that the lake has hosted 126 bird species, with 110 recorded in just the past 10 months. Its water quality, classified as "Class D," suitable for wildlife and fisheries, has been consistently maintained since the lake's rejuvenation. "The lake is not just a waterbody; it's an ecological treasure that supports diverse flora and fauna. It is our duty to protect and enhance it," said a member of the committee.

The committee has been actively monitoring the lake's ecological health and has identified several key areas that require immediate attention. One significant issue is the inadequate rainwater harvesting structures. The current barrier at the lake's main inlet has failed to channel sufficient rainwater into the lake during the monsoon, resulting in low water levels. "There is an urgent need to modify the inlet structure to enhance rainwater flow," the memorandum stated.

Another critical concern is the gaps in the lake's inner fencing, which allow street dogs to enter the lakebed. These intrusions disturb birds and other wildlife. Similarly, the lack of cattle guards at the lake's gates has led to herds of cows damaging horticultural plants and intimidating walkers, particularly senior citizens. Lighting around the lake after sunset has also been flagged as a disturbance to birds. "Birds tend to settle within the lake before sunset, and the extended lighting disrupts their natural behaviour," the committee noted, calling for stricter instructions to limit lighting hours.

The group also emphasised the need to repair uneven walking paths, which pose risks to senior citizens and children. Additionally, they proposed allowing natural grasses and plants to grow in the wetland areas, as these plants help reduce nutrient levels in the water, benefiting aquatic life and wildlife.

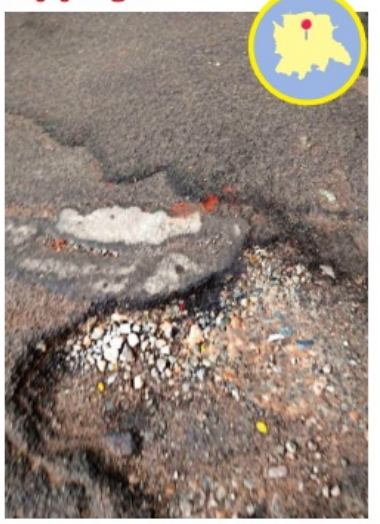
Other recommendations include increasing the height of the lake's outlet to retain water for longer periods, fixing broken fences to prevent illegal activities, and installing steel nets at inlets to block plastic waste from entering the lake.

"Our efforts have consistently focussed on improving the lake ecologically and aesthetically, but we need the BBMP's support to implement these measures," said a committee representative.

whatsapp MIRROR 9591233247

Problems in your area?
Send us a picture along with specific details. And please, no phone calls or spamming

Pothole plague
Rajajinagar



The 3rd block, Rajajinagar is plagued with potholes, increasing risk to commuters and residents.

Disappeared road
Kavalbyrasandra

The approach road on 1st cross, MM Layout in Kavalbyrasandra, has been excavated by BWSSB for drainage repairs over a month ago but has yet to be resurfaced.

Auto drama
Brigade Road

Autos parked in the no-parking zone adjacent to the traffic police kiosk at Brigade Road junction obstruct the free flow of traffic when the signal turns green.

HC dismisses rape charge against live-in partner of 22 years

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The High Court has dismissed rape charges against a man who was in a live-in relationship with his partner for 22 years. Justice M Nagaprasanna, presiding over a single judge bench, granted the petition filed by Satish and nullified the case registered against him under sections 323, 376, 417, 420, 504, 506 of the Indian Penal Code.

The court had previously granted interim relief and halted proceedings, noting that this case demonstrated misuse of legal process. It was noted that the rape allegation emerged only after the relationship deteriorated.

According to the complainant's statement, she was previously married and had two children. Due to her husband's terminal illness, she relocated to Bengaluru in 2004 and secured employment at a hotel. At the hotel, she encountered the accused, who allegedly promised marriage and better living conditions, leading her to live with him. She stated that he presented her as his wife to others and established physical relations.

The complainant alleged that she gave him Rs 8 lakh, which he used to buy vehicles. Subsequently, he

returned to his hometown and arranged marriage with another person without fulfilling his promise to her. When confronted, he allegedly responded with abusive language and created a disturbance.

The petitioner sought to dismiss the prosecution, arguing that the relationship and physical intimacy were consensual for over 18 years. Additionally, the petitioner highlighted that the complaint was filed in June 2023, approximately 18 years after the initial incident in 2004, without explaining the significant delay. This suggested possible ulterior motives behind the complaint.

HC raises concerns on receiving numerous PILs

The Karnataka High Court recently raised concerns about the numerous public interest litigation (PIL) petitions filed by the Karnataka High Court Legal Services Committee (KHLSC). Chief Justice NV Anjaria and Justice KV Aravind, whilst welcoming petition submissions, expressed their reservations about the high volume of PILs from the legal aid organisation. "Here, in this state (Karnataka), the Legal Services Authority goes on filing public interest litigations? They are welcome to file, but sometimes it does not become palatable, at least to my comprehension," the bench stated.

This observation emerged during a hearing of a PIL filed by KHLSC regarding improved wages and working conditions for part-time menial daily workers at HC judges' residences. The HC has directed the state to evaluate the petitioner's requests and previous orders by December 5.

Citizens call out shady numbers

Citizens criticise BBMP's ongoing tree census for errors like non-consecutive numbering, shrubs misidentified as trees; raise doubts about its accuracy, credibility

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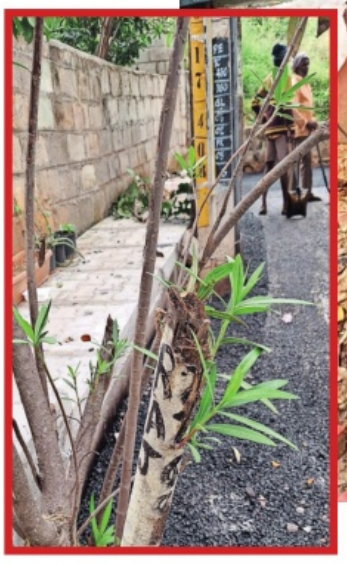
Citizens have pointed out that the ongoing tree census by the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) is riddled with discrepancies. Despite a private agency being tasked with enumerating Bengaluru's trees, citizens from various areas say the process is being carried out recklessly.

Tree IDs being generated are not only incoherent; in some areas, flower-bearing shrubs have also been tagged. "We are aghast after seeing bushes in our area counted as trees. This is condemnable. The BBMP ought to be serious about the exercise, especially when more than 80 per cent of the tree cover in the city has been decimated," said a resident of Giridhama Layout Rajarajeshwari Nagar.

Citizens from Domlur highlighted that the trees being tagged in the area by the BBMP do not have consecutive number labels. "Two trees next to each other are four numbers apart. While one of the trees in the area has been tagged as DOM34, the tree adjacent to it is DOM38. This is not the only case. On many trees counted, numbers are not consecutive. It is bizarre and creates room for suspicion. Who is to say if the trees in between exist or not? It is baffling," said a resident of Domlur.



Two trees next to each other are four numbers apart in Domlur; (inset) number tag on small plant

According to the BBMP official, the IDs are being generated randomly by the digital application developed by the Karnataka Remote Sensing Institute, leading to IDs with non-consecutive numbers for trees next to one another. "The census is happening in multiple zones simultaneously. Enumerators are using the same app to generate unique IDs for every tree being counted. Thus, the numbers might not be consecutive. But the trees with missing numbers in one area can be found in some other area," said an official.

"BBMP should have hired a contractor with trained persons to conduct the census. The contractors and workers should have been briefed about the criticality of tree enumeration. Now that it appears to be full of flaws, the outcome of the census should be verified, not once but thrice before disclosing exaggerated numbers," said Joseph Hoover, former State Board of Wildlife member and founder of the United Conservation Movement and Charitable Trust.

> **"Enumerators are using same app to generate unique IDs for every tree being counted. So, trees with missing numbers in one area can be found in some other area** –BBMP official

BBMP's public notices flawed: Experts

City-based tree activists and experts have highlighted that BBMP's public notices regarding tree removal for development activities are not in line with the rules given by the Karnataka High Court in 2020. "The public notices issued by the BBMP, on behalf of agencies seeking permission to axe trees for various projects, are always missing on multiple aspects that are required as per the HC's order. It is astonishing to see that the civic agency is not confirming the order," said a city-based expert.

According to directions issued by the HC, tree felling applications are required to have the survey number and extent of the land from which trees are to be felled. The applicant is also required to produce a survey sketch along with a khata extract and certificates from the tehsildar regarding the tenure of the land. The application should also have information such as any heritage trees in the list of the trees proposed to be felled. The applicant should further state if the number of trees to be felled can be reduced by slightly changing the alignment of the project or by executing the project in a different but viable location.

Traffic changes in KR Puram from today

In an effort to decongest Old Madras Road and KR Puram Law and Order (L&O) Police Station Road, the KR Puram Traffic Police have implemented new traffic restrictions effective from Tuesday.

The stretch from the BBMP Junction on Old Madras Road to the Veterinary Hospital near KR Puram L&O Police Station has been converted into a one-way road. Additionally, the U-turn at BBMP Junction has been closed. Vehicles heading to KR Puram, TC Palya, and Anandapura via the L&O Police Station must take a free left turn at the BBMP Junction.

BMTC buses travelling from ITI Gate to Hosakote are directed to drop passengers at a designated stop near Sri Rama Hospital. Buses heading to Diesel Shed Road must take a U-turn at Government College Junction before proceeding. Vehicles from Anandapura and KR Puram must turn left near Kote Venkataramana Swamy Temple, and take a U-turn near GRT; from TC Palya must turn left near Muniyappa Garden; from KR Puram Market to the village should turn right near Government Hospital Junction and follow the L&O Police Station road. –BMB

Hit-and-run incident: Car driver caught

The driver involved in a fatal hit-and-run accident at Kempegowda Circle on Thigalarapalya Main Road was arrested by the police. After analysing the CCTV footage from the area, the officials identified the vehicle and arrested the car's driver, Khaza Mohiddin (24), a resident of CR Pattana Hassan District. The vehicle owner, Manjunath, was also questioned. The accused driver is charged with legal action for reckless driving and fleeing the scene without aiding the victim.

The incident, which occured on November 13, claimed the life of a 20-year-old two-wheeler rider, identified as Shashikumar. The victim was riding towards Garudappa Circle when he swerved onto 14th Cross Road to avoid a recklessly approaching car. He lost control and fell onto the road, hitting a roadside pillar. The accused (the car driver) fled the scene after allegedly running over the fallen rider. –BMB

Leopard hunt begins in Shivaganga post-attack

Dept initiates search & capture operation by deploying ten cages and 50 LTF members

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A 56-year-old woman was killed in a leopard attack near Shivaganga forest in Nelamangala taluk on Sunday, officials from the Karnataka Forest Department (KFD) said.

According to KFD officials, the leopard attacked the woman when she visited her farm around 7 pm to fetch grass.

The department has initiated a search and capture operation by deploying nearly ten cages in the area and 50 members of the Leopard Task Force (LTF).

"It is confirmed that the death resulted from a leopard attack. The leopard attacked the woman and dragged her to some distance. The decapitated body of the deceased was found late at night near her farm. We have deployed a 50-member LTF team in the area, apart from additional permanent staff to identify and catch the big cat as soon as possible. We have already put three cages in the area and have sought additional cages from the neighbouring districts," said Sivasankar S, conservator of Forest, Bengaluru Circle, KFD.

To pinpoint the leopard involved in the incident, the department is also collecting DNA samples of the big cat from the victim's body. The samples will be matched with the DNA of the leopard that is captured eventually.

The department is also deploying two thermal drones to be used at night to trace the big cat in case it is hiding in a thicket in the region.

"Leopards are experts at camouflaging. We will fly the drone at night around the hillock to identify any animal movement," added Sivasankar.

A leopard trapped in Muthathi village in T Narasipura (File photo)

"Leopards are experts at camouflaging. We will fly the drone at night around the hillock to identify any animal movement to trace the big cat

–Sivasankar S, conservator of Forest, Bengaluru Circle, KFD

KFD to estimate leopard population

After receiving multiple complaints of leopard sightings and attacks from villages around Shivaganga forest, the forest department is planning to set up camera traps to estimate the number of leopards in the forest area.

"We are deploying camera traps in Shivaganga forest to estimate the number of leopards in the area. The images would also be used to identify the big cat that is responsible for the woman's death on Sunday. However, currently, we are more focused on pacifying the agitated villagers," informed Sivasankar.

Advisory issued

After the unfortunate incident on Sunday evening, the department has issued an advisory for the locals to follow until the leopard involved in the incident is caught.

"We are asking villagers to avoid venturing out during the late evening or early morning hours. In case of any emergency, they should move around in groups while ringing a bell or making some noise. Children and the elderly should be restricted from going out after 6 pm. While villagers are already cooperating, they have to be more alert," said Sivasankar.

However, experts say that villagers should be cautious and there is no need to panic. Wild carnivores attack in self-defense, and, therefore, it is advisable to avoid provoking them. Leopards are not usually inclined to attack people; on the contrary, they avoid people.

Get train tickets at ease during peak travel time

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South Western Railway (SWR) has launched the M-UTS (Mobile Unreserved Ticketing System) initiative to address challenges during peak travel times. This allows railway staff to issue unreserved tickets directly to passengers within the station premises. Currently, this system is operational at Bengaluru's Krantivira Sangolli Rayanna Station, Sir M Visvesvaraya Station, and Yeshwantpur Station. Through M-UTS machines, passengers can obtain unreserved journey tickets and platform tickets. The system permits ticket issuance within a 500-metre radius of the station.

An official added, "With M-UTS machines both unreserved journey and platform tickets can be issued, offering more efficient and accessible addition to present ticket counters. These are operated by railway staff and can be easily deployed across stations, effectively reducing passenger wait times and enhancing the overall travel experience. Unlike traditional ticket counters, these machines do not require additional installation or setup and can be deployed at any location within the station, ensuring flexibility and reducing congestion. These handheld devices operated by railway staff will allow passengers to purchase tickets instantly, making the ticketing process faster and more efficient."

During festive seasons or extended holidays, passenger traffic surges significantly, leading to long queues at ticket counters. Many travelers face delays and, in some cases, miss their trains due to the wait. To mitigate this, the M-UTS system allows railway staff to distribute tickets efficiently, reducing congestion at counters and preventing revenue loss due to unauthorised travel, explains Dr Manjunath Kanamadi, chief public relations officer of South Western Railway.

Unlike the UTS app, where passengers must independently book tickets on their smartphones, M-UTS involves railway staff issuing tickets directly. While the UTS app requires users to be at least 5 metres away from the station, the M-UTS system operates entirely within the station premises.

BM Trippin' Tales

Consumer Connect Initiative

Pool tragedy: Resorts, tourist spots urged to prioritise safety

| Sridhar.Vivan@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @sridharvMIRROR

The tragic incident of three engineering students drowning in a resort pool has sent shockwaves highlighting the importance of ensuring safety measures at recreational facilities. In fact, there has been an increase in the number of accidents involving teenagers and young adults at tourist destinations over weekends across the state. Resort and homestay operators and tourist spot authorities have been urged to prioritise safety measures to prevent such incidents.

In the past month alone, the coastal districts of Karnataka have reported four tragic incidents, resulting in six fatalities. Many of these accidents occurred due to a lack of awareness about the dangers posed by the sea and swimming pools. Tourists often venture into water bodies without understanding their depth or the strength of the waves. On May 5, two individuals drowned in the Murudeshwar sea. Similarly, on October 6, a pre-university student from Bengaluru lost his life while swimming in the same waters. On October 27, two tourists from Bengaluru drowned in Koteshwara, and most recently, on November 16, three young women from Mysuru tragically lost their lives in a swimming pool at a resort in Uchila.

Vazco Beach Resort, located at Battappadi Cross Road in Someshwara village, been sealed, following the incident of three engineering students from Mysuru losing their lives after drowning in the resort swimming pool

Six deaths in one month

The alarming rise in fatalities underscores the urgent need for preventive measures:

September 23, 2023: A Kerala-based bank manager drowned in a hotel swimming pool in Mangaluru.

October 12, 2023: Abhishek (25) from Haryana lost his life at Mangala Stadium swimming pool, Mangaluru.

May 5, 2023: Two individuals, Ismail (22) from Bhatkal and a youth from Shivamogga, drowned in the Murudeshwar.

October 6, 2023: A pre-university student from Bengaluru drowned in the Murudeshwar.

October 27, 2023: Ajay (25) from Kundapura and Santosh (25) from Bengaluru drowned in Koteshwara.

November 16, 2023: Three young women from Mysuru—Nishitha MD (21), Parvathi S (20), and Keerthana N (21)—lost their lives in a swimming pool at a resort in Uchila.

Prioritising safety at tourist spots

Sources said that during the day and evening, lifeguard teams monitor activities at beaches and caution tourists against venturing into dangerous waters. Despite their efforts, lifeguards often risk their lives to save others. However, inadequate safety measures at resorts and homestays, particularly in swimming pools, remain a significant concern. Rajendra Rao, a senior lifeguard, highlighted the need for stricter safety protocols at these locations, as even shallow pools have proven fatal. As the year-end season is set to start from next month, one can expect a sharp rise in tourist arrivals in the coastal districts of Dakshina Kannada and Udupi. Public demand has grown for district administrations to enforce stricter safety regulations at adventure sports venues and other recreational spots.

Rao stressed the risks associated with inadequate pool depths and lack of supervision. In the recent incident at Uchila, the swimming pool, though only 5.5 feet deep, proved dangerous. He explained that panic can cause individuals to lose balance and control, leading to tragic outcomes, even in shallow water.

Addiction cases spike in the age of hustle

Experts list out reasons for rise in addiction to substances, gaming, digital devices

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Psychiatrists have noticed a worrying trend of increasing addiction among Gen Z. Young people are struggling with unique mental health challenges caused by intense academic and career pressure, the overwhelming impact of social media, and the constant push of "hustle" culture. These factors are combining to fuel addictive behaviours in many young adults.

At Cadabams Rehabilitation Centre, it has been observed that there is a 38% spike in the number of urban Gen Z individuals seeking expert help to manage addiction to substances, gaming, and digital devices, which they developed as coping mechanisms.

Dr. Arohi Vardhan, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist at Cadabams Hospitals said, "We are increasingly concerned about the growing prevalence of addiction among Gen Z, shaped by the multifaceted pressures of modern living. While urban environments often amplify these challenges, this issue is not confined to city life alone. Gen Z is navigating a unique intersection of rapid technological advancements, heightened academic and professional competition, societal comparisons, and easy access to addictive substances and behaviours. "

In one of the cases, Rahul (name changed), a 22-year-old engineering student from Bengaluru, was once a promising student with big dreams. However, the relentless academic demands, financial pressures, and the constant need to keep up with peers on social media left him feeling trapped. Seeking an escape, he turned to recreational drugs - what started as occasional use quickly became a dependency.

Spcial media is said to be a big reason for pressure among teens

Rahul's family noticed his withdrawal and declining mental health and sought professional help. Experts at Cadabams Hospitals identified that Rahul's addiction was a coping mechanism for the overwhelming pressures of urban life. Through therapy and structured interventions, Rahul was able to regain stability and rediscover healthier ways to handle stress.

"Stories like Rahul's are becoming alarmingly common, as Gen Z struggles to navigate a world of high expectations and unrelenting urban challenges," said Dr Vardhan.

Commonly seen addictions include both substances and behavioural addictions. Substances used commonly are such as nicotine (vaping), cannabis, amphetamines and alcohol. Behavioral addictions like excessive social media use, online gaming, and gambling are emerging as significant concerns of late in clinics, which are often serving as maladaptive coping mechanisms for stress and anxiety.

> **Despite being more aware of mental health issues than prior generations, Gen Z faces barriers, including limited access to affordable care**
>
> –Dr Arohi Vardhan, Cadabams Hospital

"Despite being more aware of mental health challenges than previous generations, Gen Z faces systemic barriers, including limited access to affordable mental health care and societal pressures to succeed. The overwhelming volume of online information further complicates their ability to discern reliable resources. To address these challenges, we must prioritize accessible mental health services, educate on adaptive coping strategies, and create supportive environments to safeguard their well-being," added Dr Vardhan.

According to Dr. Sunil, Director Facilitator at Cadabams Rehabilitation Centre social media, in particular, is a major causal factor fostering anxiety, comparison, and a need for constant validation. Moreover, the blurring boundaries between work and personal life, coupled with limited access to healthy coping resources, are amplifying mental health struggles.

'Drugs sold as chocolates, tablets in medical stores; harsh action taken'

Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara stated on Monday that narcotics and drugs were sold in the state in the form of chocolates and tablets and the state government has taken strict action to curb the menace.

"Harsh action has been initiated to tackle the drug menace," HM Parameshwara stated.

Speaking to reporters in Mysuru, he stated, "We have declared a war on drugs and seized drugs worth hundreds of crores since over a year and cases have been lodged against many."

"Cases were slapped against those students who have come from foreign countries and were involved in drug peddling. Some of them were deported and we have deported about 70 to 80 people. Otherwise, if only cases are lodged, they will stay back here and continue their acts. In this background, we inform their embassies and authorities and deport them," HM Parameshwara stated.

"Harsh actions have been initiated and there is no compromise in dealing with drugs as the narcotics are sold in the form of chocolates and in medical stores they are sold in the form of tablets. We are also monitoring this and recommending cancellation of the licences of medical stores indulging in this act," he noted.

"Not only in Karnataka, in the entire country, whether it is Mumbai and New Delhi there is this problem. I was in charge of Maharashtra for Assembly elections and there as well the question was raised in this regard," he stated.

Action initiated to tackle the drug menace

"The drug menace is being sponsored everywhere by a big network. As I have observed, the drugs are coming in from ports in a big proportion. We have to continuously monitor it and cases need to be booked. If we relax and there are gaps, they will be at it," he said.

"You will be surprised to know how the drugs are brought inside. They will keep drugs inside the human body and they will also bring it in other forms. The drugs are brought through airports and interstate transport systems. In Visakhapatnam one-and-a-half tonnes of marijuana was caught. We are continuously carrying out operations," HM Parameshwara said.

When asked about the ganja menace in the state, he stated, "There are two types in ganja. They grow some amount in the state. We will monitor and stop it by conducting raids. Second, there is a menace of hydro ganja prevalent in the state and we are dealing with it by initiating strict action." –IANS

Drive targets speedsters, drunk drivers

The traffic police recently conducted a special drive targeting drunk driving and speeding between November 11 and November 17. This initiative involved traffic officers from 50 police stations across the city and was aimed at enhancing road safety and curbing traffic violations.

In a week, the traffic police checked 43,751 vehicles and a total of 551 cases of drunk and drive and 176 cases of speeding were booked and a total of Rs 1.7 lakh was collected in fines, in a week. –BMB

Man fined, sentenced for fatal accident

The Additional Chief Judicial magistrate court convicted a mini bus driver and sentenced him with 1.3 years of simple imprisonment and fined him 9,000 in a fatal road accident reported in September 2021.

The accused identified as Sunil Kumar R, was driving the vehicle in a negligent manner, knocking down the motorcycle rider Kalyan Kumar (25) at Vinayaka Nagar on Varthur-Gunjur road causing severe injuries to Kalyan Kumar.

Kalyan was later rushed to a private hospital and after a few days he was discharged and was in bed rest for a long time. However, the problem aggravated and he was taken to the hospital where he succumbed to injuries in December 2021.

The Whitefield traffic police based on the medico legal case registered a case of death due to negligence and rash and negligent driving against Sunil Kumar and had filed a charge-sheet before the court. –BMB

MUDA: ED summons Mallikarjuna

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) officials have summoned Mallikarjuna Swamy, the brother-in-law of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, for questioning in connection with the ongoing investigation into the alleged land scam in the Mysore Urban Development Authority (MUDA). Mallikarjuna, who is also identified as accused-3 in the case, appeared for the first time before the ED at their office in Shanti Nagar, Bengaluru.

The case revolves around a 3.16-acre piece of land, which Mallikarjuna Swamy purchased from Devaraju, the original landowner. The land was later donated to his sister Parvathi, the wife of CM Siddaramaiah, for the Arishina Kumkum event.

ED officials are reportedly seeking details regarding the nature of the land transaction, including whether it was conducted in cash and how the purchase was made. The Lokayukta has already interrogated Siddaramaiah and Devaraju in connection with the matter. –BMB

Omkar Salvi is RCB's new bowling coach

Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) on Monday, announced the appointment of Omkar Salvi as the bowling coach of the men's team, according to a release from the franchise.

Omkar who has won the Ranji Trophy, Irani Trophy and the IPL in the last 8 months will join RCB in time for IPL 2025 after completion of his Indian Domestic season duties.

Most recently, Salvi made headlines by taking over as head coach of the Mumbai team for the 2023-24 season, where he led them to their historic Ranji title--Mumbai's first in eight years and their 42nd overall. Before this, he spent four seasons as the team's bowling coach, further cementing his reputation as a key architect of success.

RCB's Director of Cricket, Mo Bobat, said that the franchise is thrilled to welcome Salvi.

Salvi will be reuniting with Dinesh Karthik at RCB after the latter was appointed the team's batting coach and mentor for 2025. The pair have previously worked together in IPL.

—ANI

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I, GANGADHARA BULBULE (old name as per SSLC reg no: 2365538) S/o MAHABALESHWAR residing at F 2 Athreya Apartment 2nd Block Rajajinagar Bengaluru 560010, have changed my name to MILIND MAHABALESHWAR BULBULE (MILIND M B, new name as per Aadhar no: 2968 9340 0846) vide affidavit dated 14/11/2024 sworn before Notary Suresh N Jalihal at Belagavi.

I, Amitabh Singh, R/o No.-1402,Wing-1,BREN Imperia Apts.,15th Main,Shubh Enclave,Harlur Road, Bangalore-560102 have changed my minor son name from Shivansh Singh to Shivansh Singh Solanki.

I, Rani Manjunatha W/o Manjunatha.K. R/o No. 18/1, 8 Th Cross Sampangiramanagar, B'luru-560027 have changed my name to Rani V for all purposes.

I, Nagaraju Lakshmaiah R/o 3/599, Raghavendra Nagar, Bagalur, Krishnagiri, Tamilnadu 635103 present camp at Bengaluru have changed my name to Nagaraj Lakshmaiah Affidavit Dt.13/11/2024 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I,NAMITHA Shenoy R/O No 206, Prakruthi Providence Creat,1st cross, 5th Main, Tatanagar, Blr-92 changed my name from Namitha to Namitha Shenoy for all future purposes.

LOST & FOUND

I Sania Alexandria Lost My ICSE Original Marks Statement(TU 10030652), Migration (MC2428223) (TU 50030645) Near AMC College, Bangalore On June 2024 CALL-9845024230

I Seema Kantilal S/O, Kanthilal Bhandari Ganeshmal R/o Flat No. 1261, Prestige Westwoods, Gopalapura , Bangalore - 560023 have changed my name to Seema K.

I Dilip Parasmal Jain S/O, Parasmal Jain R/o 1261,tower 1, Prestige Westwoods, gopalapura, bangalore-560023 have changed my name to Dilip P.

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Where exactly will this bus choose to stop?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

are irresponsible and don't halt at designated bus stops, this has created chaos."

Drivers' side of story

However, BMTC bus drivers say they face a range of operational challenges that contribute to this issue. Drivers said there are often civic obstacles such as haphazard parking along routes, severe traffic congestion, and unpredictable passenger behaviour. They argue that many passengers do not wait at official bus stops, which complicates their ability to adhere to schedules and safely manoeuvre the vehicles.

A BMTC bus driver explained, "Private vehicles are often parked near bus stops, which forces us to stop either before or after the designated spot. In heavy traffic, vehicles pile up near bus stops, leaving us no choice but to halt wherever we can find space, putting us in a difficult position. Additionally, approximately 8 Miles from Goraguntepalya to RMC Road, we encounter heavy congestion with 50 to 150 private buses parked along the roadside, making it very challenging to navigate through."

As this standoff continues, it highlights a critical gap in public transport services in Bengaluru that requires urgent attention.

We spoke to a public transport expert to understand how this deadlock can be broken.

"Once buses exit the bus lane, it becomes challenging for them to re-enter the bus bay due to the constant traffic flow. To avoid this inconvenience, they often stay in the middle of the road," explained Shreya Gadepalli, Founder of

Urban Workers.

"Bengaluru's experiment with dedicated bus lanes has shown some success. When you have exclusive bus lanes, it eliminates conflicts between buses and other traffic. These lanes ensure buses remain close to bus stops, creating a win-win situation: drivers face fewer conflicts, buses move faster as they avoid traffic congestion, and passengers enjoy quicker commutes and easier boarding. The key solution lies in creating dedicated bus lanes," Shreya said.

Bring back bus lanes?

Bus lanes have demonstrated remarkable potential, as evidenced by a study, which revealed that more than 50% of people utilised buses due to exclusive bus lanes. "These lanes allow the same number of buses to make more trips without even increasing their speed, effectively enhancing service frequency. Faster buses attract more passengers, as they avoid being stuck in traffic," Shreya said.

According to study conducted between May and July 2022, the study highlighted improvements in travel time, the survey of 979 Bengaluru bus passengers revealed that 86% support expanding the bus lane system to key areas like Hebbal, Silk Board, and Whitefield, with 54% of long-distance commuters reducing journeys from 60-90 minutes to 30-60 minutes. Despite the bus lane's positive impact on speed and waiting times, issues like crowding persisted, with 16% reporting worsening conditions. Safety and staff behaviour improved for 35% of respondents. Most (61%) demanded more buses, and 44% sought better bus stops. However, the bus lane was discontinued in mid-2022 for metro work.

Whose space is it?

Interestingly, the sight of buses zipping through dedicated lanes sometimes evokes frustration among private vehicle owners stuck in traffic. "They feel like their space has been taken by buses, but the reality is quite the opposite. Buses carry around 50 passengers each, while 50 passengers in cars would require 50 vehicles, consuming significantly more road space—about 20% more," Shreya explained.

The misconception that cars have a greater right to road space undermines efficient urban mobility. "Exclusive bus lanes not only make commuting faster for passengers but also offer car users a viable alternative to avoid traffic congestion."

She further advocated the 'Triple 5' bus solution: A bus stop within 5 minutes of every home, buses arriving every 5 minutes, and no journey delayed by more than 5 minutes. "If implemented, why would anyone hesitate to choose public transport? It would eliminate most of the issues people face and make public commuting the most convenient option," she said.

Smaller machines to be deployed in shopping areas

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

adequately cleared. Currently, large mechanised cleaning machines are used only on arterial and sub-arterial roads. In commercial areas, markets, and other busy zones, dust removal has been minimal. To address dust pollution and its health impacts, BBMP has opted to introduce smaller cleaning machines."

A tender for the procurement of these machines has been issued at an estimated expenditure of Rs 5.8 crore. The agency that bags the tender is required to supply the machines within six months and handle operation and maintenance for two years. Under the 15th Finance Commission grant, BBMP's solid waste management division will procure 86 small electric cleaning machines with a capacity of two cubic metres each.

20 km of daily cleaning

To clear the dust on arterial and sub-arterial roads, BBMP has already purchased 25 large mechanised cleaning machines, which clean an average of 25 kilometres of roads at night. The newly planned smaller electric cleaning machines will clean around 20 km of roads each day, with dust being collected and disposed of at designated locations. These electric machines will be deployed in Silicon City's major shopping zones, such as Avenue Road, Chickpet, Balepet, BVK Iyengar Road, MG Road, Commercial Street, Church Street, Jayanagar, Malleshwaram, and other densely populated areas.

Increase in asthma due to dust

Airborne particulate matter (PM) poses health risks to people and the environment. PM2.5, particles smaller than 2.5 micrometres, and PM10, particles smaller than 10 micrometres, are major pollutants. In India, PM2.5 is considered hazardous, while PM10 is a common pollutant. Dust particles, especially PM2.5, have led to increased asthma cases among children and the elderly, along with respiratory issues, cough, and congestion, impacting lifestyle and health. Prolonged inhalation of these fine particles can result in long-term respiratory issues.

Plans to rent 60 machines

"The city's arterial and sub-arterial roads cover a total of 1,344 km, yet only 625 km of these are currently serviced by 25 dust collection machines. To cover the remaining routes, 60 machines will be procured on a rental basis, extending the city's dust cleaning efforts," an official added.

HEALTH TIP: Calcium helps to maintain the pH balance and aids in proper digestion

Bananas are extremely beneficial for gut and stomach health because of their high fiber content

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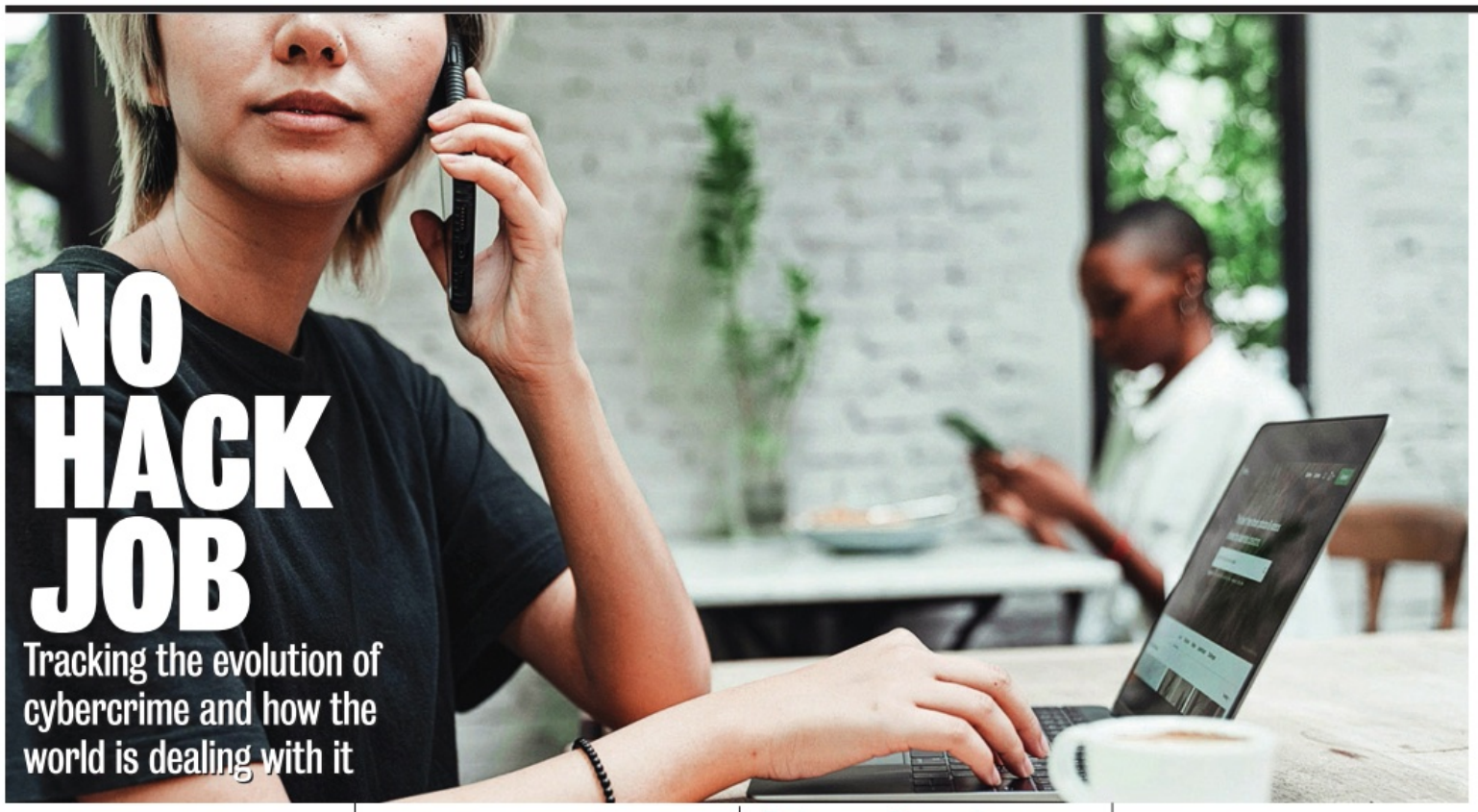

NO HACK JOB

Tracking the evolution of cybercrime and how the world is dealing with it

Earlier this year, the US government warned state governors about foreign hackers carrying out disruptive cyberattacks against water and sewage systems.

Increasing digitisation of our lives has meant we are more vulnerable to cybercrime than ever. And the role of cybersecurity has become crucial.

Social engineering, deep fakes, ransomware, zero-day exploits and supply chain attacks are emerging as new forms of cybercrime.

Social engineering includes a range of malicious activities where cybercriminals psychologically manipulate users and trick them into making security mistakes, or giving away sensitive information.

In September, a prominent Indian businessman was swindled by cyber criminals who made him pay USD 830,000, after summoning him to a fake court hearing and threatening jail time for a crime he had not committed.

Zero-day exploits is a cyberattack vector that takes advantage of an unknown or unaddressed security flaw in a computer software, hardware or firmware.

Zero day means that the software or device has zero days to fix the flaw because malicious actors can already use it to access vulnerable systems.

According to a joint cybersecurity advisory from US, Australian, British and New Zealand government agencies, several enterprise networks with zero-day vulnerabilities were the main targets of malicious cyberactors in 2023.

Network defenders have been warned that the attackers may continue to exploit such vulnerabilities until 2025.

From Russian cyberspies conducting an espionage campaign against Mongolian government websites, to hackers breaking into the US presidential campaign, to a faulty software update disrupting airline and hospital operations, the need for sound cybersecurity investments has never been higher.

Hacking away at new technology

The evolution of cybersecurity as an educational and professional discipline can be traced back to the emergence of computers and the first cases of cybercrime in the 1990s to early 2000.

The digital revolution meant that cybercriminals learnt technology to engineer newer ways to cheat people and steal data from organisations.

For instance, in 1994, British hackers known as Datastream Cowboy and "Kuji" attacked Rome Laboratory's computer systems more than 150 times.

Rome Laboratory is the US Air Force's premier command and control research facility. During the attacks, the hackers stole sensitive data on air tasking order research. Air tasking orders are messages military commanders send to pilots during wartime. The orders provide information on air battle tactics, such as where the enemy is located and what targets are to be attacked.

Through the 1990s, banks were robbed, credit card information was stolen and used, and government networks were broken in. Later, as technology evolved, so did the criminals. From devising simple viruses to sophisticated malware, direct attacks to phishing and social engineering, simple financial frauds to large-scale data breaches – cybercrime really came into its own.

Now, cybercriminals are evolving their way to exploit vulnerabilities using advanced tools such as AI and automation, and continue to target critical infrastructure. Recent security breaches such as AI-based phishing attacks in 2023 and the 2018 hacking of Facebook's user data show the evolution of the criminals, and their adaptability to the latest technology.

But security systems have been evolving too.

Increased transfer of information over the web, particularly sensitive information, has led to new technologies in encryption, firewalls and other mechanisms to ensure adequate security and maintain credibility of transactions over the internet.

For instance, Zero Trust firewalls, a security model, establishes trust through continuous authentication and monitoring of each network access attempt.

This is different because in a traditional model it was assumed that everything in a corporate network can be trusted. Other traditional measures of security management include demilitarised zone, and access control and intrusion detection methods.

A demilitarised zone or DMZ is a physical or logical subnet that separates a local area network (LAN) from other untrusted networks — usually, the public internet. New security measures such as web application firewalls with advanced threat protection have also been designed to detect and protect against common security flaws in web traffic.

These are essential for online businesses such as retailers, banks, healthcare and social media, which need to protect sensitive data. To ensure cybersecurity, all organisations need to put in place policies and procedures, based on certain best practices, beyond the simple defences of specific systems and networks.

Global unity to fight cybercrime

Over the years, cybersecurity has evolved to become a crosscutting discipline across computer science, information technology, legal and psychological and risk management domains.

It is essential to protect not just data systems and networks, but also physical structures such as industrial control systems, healthcare infrastructure, as well as basic systems such as energy grids, ATMs, payment processing systems, banks and cryptocurrency platforms.

Governments across the globe have identified cybersecurity as a key area of concern, and put into place laws to protect information.

Some examples include the Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act in the US, and the General Data Protection Regulation in the EU.

In India, the Digital Personal Data Protection Act came into force in 2023, and a new law to protect personal data is being considered.

Enterprises such as Microsoft, Google, Walmart, and Amazon have made significant investments in cybersecurity, including using advanced AI and machine learning for real-time threat detection. Google's Chronicle platform, for instance, offers a security analytics tool.

In August, the United Nations also finalised a new cybercrime treaty, which seeks to improve international collaboration in combating cybercrime.

It outlines measures for countries to collect and share data on suspects, ease the extradition of cybercriminals, and confiscate crime-related proceeds.

But the cybersecurity environment is dynamic

New threats such as the botnets, cloud security threats such as API vulnerabilities require constant vigilance and innovation to stay ahead of cybercriminals.

With newer measures such as advanced anti-phishing technologies, and threat intelligence to counter zero-day vulnerabilities, cybersecurity professionals can create a strong protective shield encompassing different levels of government, businesses and individuals.

(By Abhishek Jain, BML Munjal University, 360info)

All you need to know about...

Oral contraceptives & BP

No rise in BP

Oral contraceptives do not increase the blood pressure response in women during large muscle exercise (like cycling or running), according to a study on Monday led by researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras.

Pill effect

Oral contraceptives or birth control pills are taken by women to prevent pregnancy and reduce acne, menstrual cramps, and the risk of ovarian cysts.

Although certain oral contraceptives are known to raise resting blood pressure, the exercise blood pressure response during intense exercises is not currently well understood.

In addition, research has been ambiguous on whether hormonal fluctuations during the menstrual cycle influence blood pressure.

In response to exercise

The researchers, including from the University of Minnesota, US, found that both oral contraceptive use and general fluctuations in endogenous ovarian hormone (like estrogens) in young women (20–25 years of age), did not influence blood pressure.

The results were similar with lower body exercise and activation of skeletal muscle sensory neurons -- known to contribute to exaggerated blood pressure responses in people with cardiovascular diseases. "The findings of this study have wide application and are important as it sheds light on the influence of oral contraceptives on blood pressure response to exercise in women," said Dr. Ninitha AJ, Assistant Professor, Department of Biotechnology, IIT Madras.

EPR

Exercise can acutely increase blood pressure due to increased sympathetic nerve activity (fight or flight) from skeletal muscle sensory neurons known as 'Exercise Pressor Reflex' (EPR).

The EPR results in an increase in blood flow from the heart to the skeletal muscle to meet the needs of the muscle. —IANS

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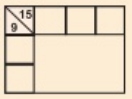
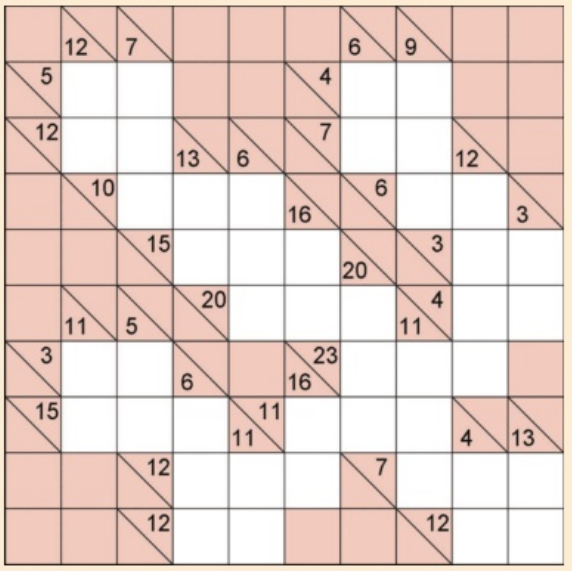
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

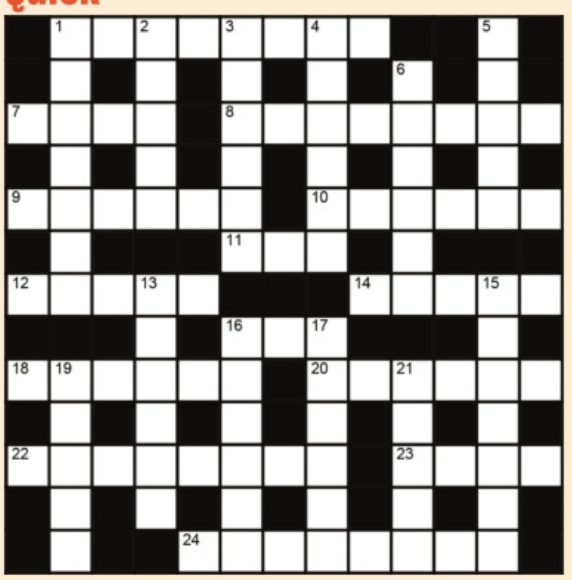


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Attenuated or diluted (8)
7 Unchanged (2,2)
8 Biblical town in Israel (8)
9 One to whom a lease is granted? (6)
10 Repaired (6)
11 Norwegian rug (3)
12 Dwarf planet (5)
14 Beat (5)
16 Actress Gardner (3)
18 Road (6)
20 Compares, correlates or equates (6)
22 Large store (8)
23 Duty-roster (4)
24 Great Sanskrit poet of Meghadoot and Raghuvamsa (8)

DOWN

1 ___ Market: Market In Shivajinagar (7)
2 Corrodes or oxidises? (5)
3 Discoverer (6)
4 Skin inflammation (6)
5 ___ ___ dot : very promptly? (2,3)
6 European language (6)
13 Vibration (6)
15 Singers Frank and Nancy (7)
16 King of the Huns (6)
17 Past pupils (6)
19 Domesticated or trained (5)
21 Destiny, fate (5)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: U EQUALS D

QR LKM UKX'H SWNVX HK SNMEP NH HVKMCSW, LKM YKX'H PNAW NXLHPQXE HK SNMEP NH YPWX LKM'VW KSU.

Linemaro

Are you a magician? Every time I look at you, everybody disappears

Mindchow

If you feel there is more to life than this, discover it

Joke of the day

I always take my wife her morning tea in my pajamas, but is she grateful? No she says she'd rather have it in a cup

Loop

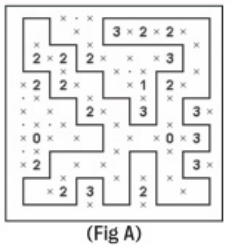
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

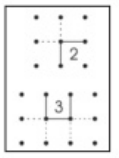
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

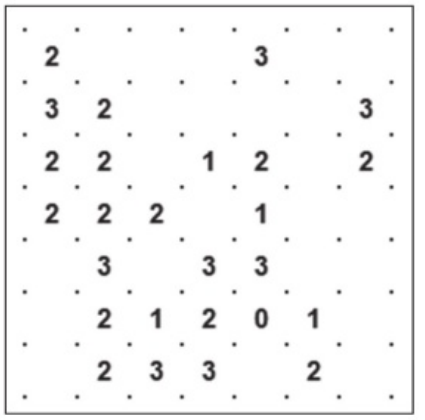
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



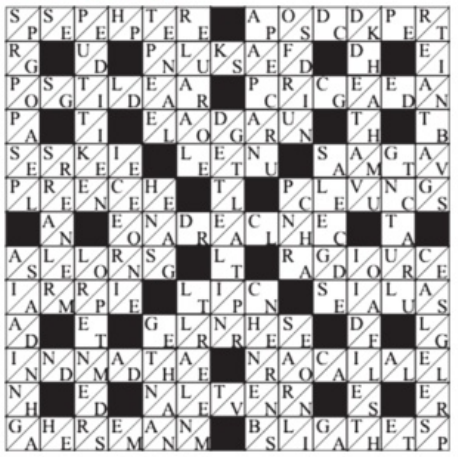
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



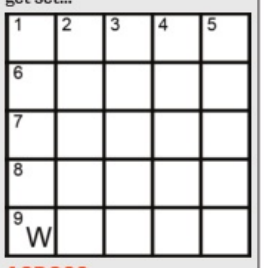
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

1 Rig as; 6 Lee CT; 7 Stein; 8 A pain; 9 LK hew

DOWN

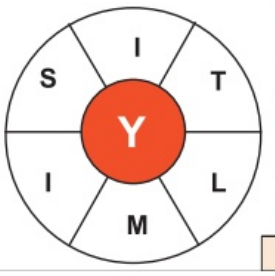
1 Wears; 2 A help; 3 Eigen; 4 I talc; 5 Knits

Mensapuzzle

Which number replaces the question mark and completes the puzzle?

2	3
6	4
8	12
24	?

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

02 Average; 03 Good; 04 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

		1	2	9	3	8		
4	9						3	6
				1				
	7			2			6	
5			1		4			2
	1			3			7	
				4				
3	8						2	4
		9	7	5	2	6		

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

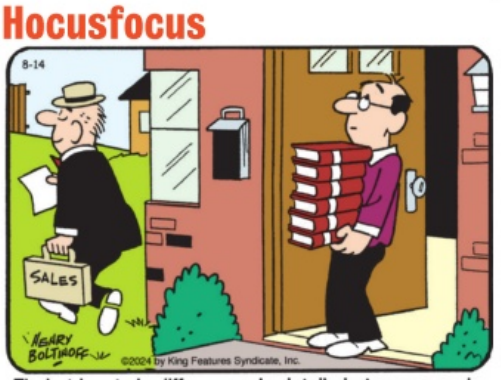
Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ = 26
4 6 7 9

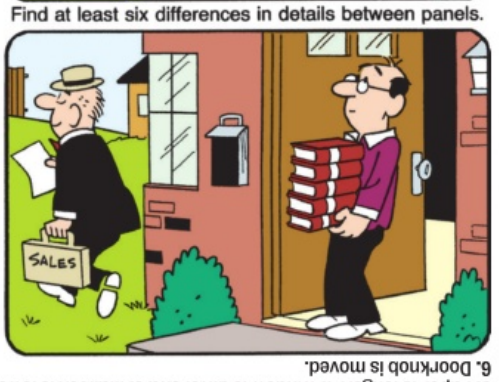
Medium ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ = 32
2 6 8 9

Hard ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ = 35
2 7 8 5

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Book is missing. 2. Bush is taller. 3. Paper is longer. 4. Window is different. 5. Mailbox is lower. 6. Doorknob is moved.

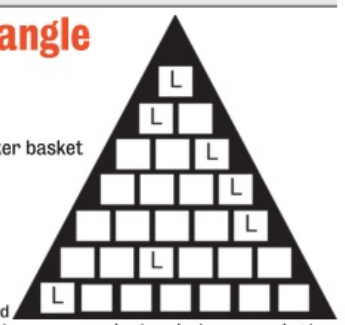
Riddler

Based on the clue in parentheses, find a four-letter word that can be inserted backwards into the blank to complete a longer word.

1. s____ing (earth)
2. si____lk (felt reverent)

Alpha triangle

1 Litre
2 French article
3 Long fish
4 Spool
5 Fisherman's wicker basket
6 Edible stalk
7 Lewdness

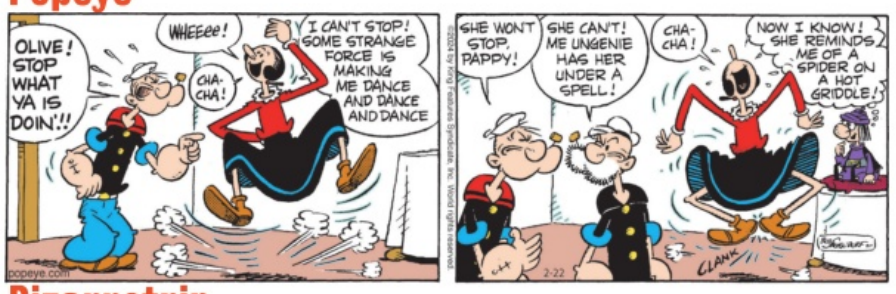


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

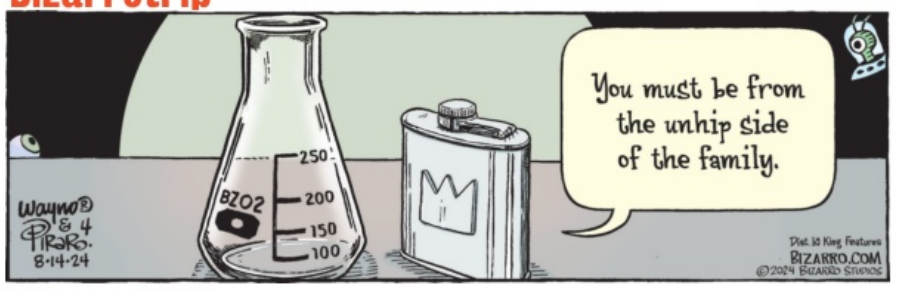
DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye


OLIVE! STOP WHAT YA IS DOIN'!!!
WHEEee!
CHA-CHA!
I CAN'T STOP! SOME STRANGE FORCE IS MAKING ME DANCE AND DANCE AND DANCE
SHE WON'T STOP, PAPPY!
SHE CAN'T! ME UNGENIE HAS HER UNDER A SPELL!
CHA-CHA!
NOW I KNOW! SHE REMINDS ME OF A SPIDER ON A HOT GRIDDLE!
CLANK

Bizarrotrip

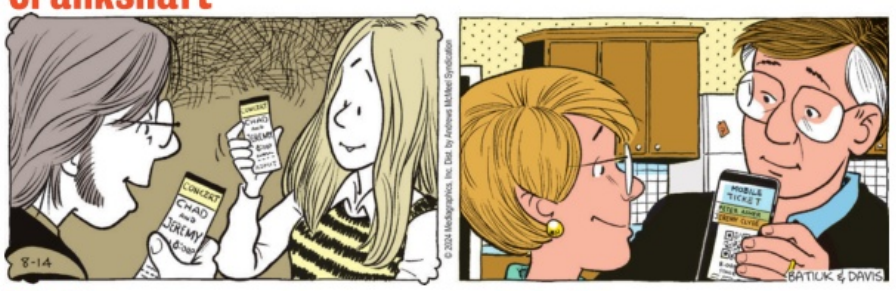


Diamond Lil

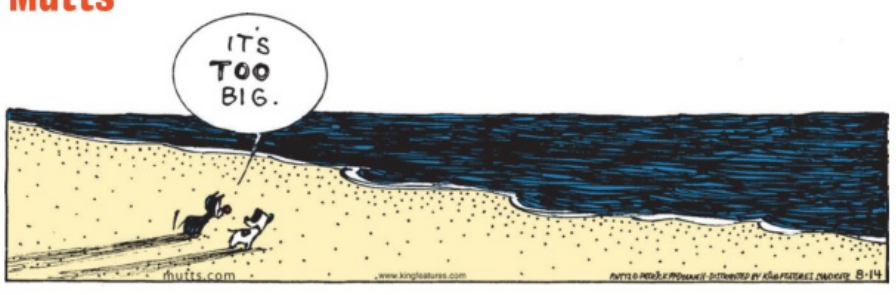
Hart of the city

YOUR HAIRCUT LOOKS GREAT!
THANKS! IT GROWS SO FAST, IT'LL PROBABLY BE BACK IN A PONYTAIL NEXT WEEK.
AND IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE GOT A NEW LETTER TO OPEN!
Wow! Your hair looks so great!! We'd better get your makeup done to match. See you soon!!!! @Charlotte
MOM, I CAN WEAR MAKEUP NOW?!
JUST ON YOUR BIRTHDAY. DON'T GET ANY IDEAS.
CONTOURING, HERE I COME!

Crankshaft



Mutts



WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you may feel some internal weakness, and there is a chance of major health issues reoccurring. You may find it hard to enjoy both domestic and professional life. Running projects could come to an unexpected halt, which may upset you. It's advised to drive carefully. The blessings of your elders may help you navigate this challenging situation.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today, you may feel the positive energy around you, and things seem to be under control. You might plan to start a new business in partnership and expect some long-distance travel as well. Trust in your spouse will grow, bringing harmony to your domestic life.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Today is a good day for you. Investors may see significant gains in their investments, improving their financial health. Stuck money may be recovered, increasing liquidity in your business. You'll feel confident and capable of handling hidden enemies and opponents. Singles might find a match in the same field or workplace.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Today, you may feel dissatisfied and struggle to fulfill your responsibilities. Investments may lead to some losses, so it's advised to read documents carefully before signing. Concerns about your parents' health might also trouble you. If you're considering renovating your office, it's best to postpone it for a few days.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Today, you might consider moving to a new place, but it's wise to think twice before deciding. You may also contemplate changing jobs. While you'll feel peaceful, your child's health might worry you. It's best to avoid speculation in investments. Couples should exercise patience before making marriage-related decisions.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today, you'll have good patience, and meditation could help improve your concentration, speeding up your projects. Your subordinates will likely cooperate with you, which could help you complete projects ahead of schedule. Short work-related travel may be on the horizon, and an influential person might help you expand your network.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today, you may be busy with family gatherings and social events, becoming more polite with those around you, which will elevate your status. You might spend on artifacts or household items, boosting your social standing. Good news from a relative may also brighten your day.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Today, you may feel happy and blessed by the moon, with good health positively influencing your work. You'll likely perform well in all areas, improving your reputation. With heightened concentration, you may make some crucial business decisions that foster growth.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today, your vitality may feel low, and an old health condition could resurface, causing discomfort. It's advised to avoid adventurous activities or rushing while driving. Stay away from any type of legal disputes; it's better to settle them outside of court. You might also plan an overseas trip.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Today, you may start the day with happiness. At work, quick decision-making could enhance your management skills, bringing benefits in the future. A new source of income might increase your savings. With the support of your business partner, you may consider investing in your business. Closer bonding with your spouse may bring harmony to domestic life.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today, you may be busy at work. Mental fatigue might prevent you from spending time with your family. However, with the blessings of elders, job seekers may secure a high position, and managers could be promoted to top management. Recognition and rewards could elevate your status, and professionally, you'll likely perform well.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today, you may feel the positive energy around you, guiding you on the right path. With a calm mind, your performance on all fronts will be impressive. Luck seems to be on your side. You might plan a visit to a religious place far from home, and your inner sense may inspire you to engage in charity. You may also receive good news related to a grandchild.

KIDZONE

Soniya Advani, Bengaluru

Akshit A Rajwade, Bengaluru

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Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
√(√(256+√81)) = √(16+9) = √(25) = 5
√(√(121+√25)) = √(11+5) = √(16) = 4
√5+4 = √9 = 3

QUOTE UNCODE
If you don't learn to laugh at trouble, you won't have anything to laugh at when you're old.

RIDDLER
1. strIding (DIRT – s_TRID_ing) &
2. sIdewalk (AWED – sI_DEWA_lk)

FAST FIVE

R	A	G	I	S
E	L	E	C	T
A	P	I	A	N
S	E	N	T	I
W	H	E	L	K

STRIKE OUT

P	E	P	P	E	R	P	O	C	K	E	T	S		
R	U	P	U	K	E	D	H	E						
O	S	T	L	E	R	C	I	C	A	D	A			
P	T	E	A	G	A	N	T	B						
E	R	E	I	L	E	N	S	A	G	A				
L	E	E	C	H	L	C	L	U	N	G				
A	E	A	R	A	C	H	E	A						
A	L	O	N	G	T	A	D	O	R	E				
I	M	P	I	T	I	C	S	A	L	A				
D	E	E	R	N	E	S	F	G						
I	N	N	A	T	E	R	A	C	I	A	L			
N	E	N	E	V	E	R	S	E						
G	E	R	M	A	N	S	I	G	H	T	S			

QUICK

R	A	R	E	F	I	E	D	O						
U	U	I	C	F	N									
A	S	I	S	N	A	Z	A	R	E	T	H			
S	T	D	E	E	H									
L	E	S	S	E	E	M	E	N	O	E	D			
E	M	P	O	R	I	U	M	R	O	T	A			
A	M	T	U	A	A									
S	T	R	E	T	L	I	K	E	N	S				
R	A	V	A	I										
P	L	U	T	O	W	H	I	S	K					
L	R	Y	A	C	L	U	N	G						
D	K	A	L	I	D	A	S	A						

MENSA PUZZLE
16. Starting with the top left number, and working down one row at a time, alternating between left and right, double the number each time. Repeat this sequence, starting with the top right number.

BULL'S EYE
Ilmy, MISTILY, misty, slimy

SUDOKU

6	5	1	2	9	3	8	4	7
3	8	5	9	6	1	7	2	4
7	2	6	3	4	8	9	1	5
2	1	4	6	3	9	5	7	8
5	6	8	1	7	4	3	9	2
9	7	3	8	2	5	4	6	1
8	3	7	4	1	6	2	5	9
4	9	2	5	8	7	1	3	6
1	4	9	7	5	2	6	8	3

ALPHA TRIANGLE
L, Le, Eel, Reel, Creel, Celery, Lecherv.

GO FIGURE
Easy
7 + 9 + 4 + 6 = 26
2 x 9 + 8 + 6 = 32
Medium
3 x 2 + 1 x 2 x 0 x 1 = 32
Hard
8 x 5 – 7 + 2 = 35

LOOP

KAKURO

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 # French honour
Veteran actor Shabana Azmi, who completed 50 years in Hindi cinema in 2024, will be honoured with a retrospective of her films at the 46th Festival des 3 Continents in France

SANDALWOOD SHOTS

Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Shooting begins

Newcomers have teamed up with senior character actors for Gowrishankara. The film's muhurat function was held at Sri Vinayaka Venkateswara Temple recently. Producer Rajanna switched on the camera.

Shubha Film Factory is bankrolling the movie while Mahesh Chinmayi is handling the megaphone. "My fourth movie Nijathaane is ready for release. Gowrishankara is my fifth movie. The first schedule of the shooting will be held in and around Shivamogga for 25 to 30 days," the director said.

He said the movie is a work of fiction. "The movie revolves around a gold medalist. He runs pillar to post and meets elected representatives and visits many companies seeking a suitable job but in vain," he said. The movie features Sunil Bhangi, Abhishek, Kusuma, Priya Naganna, veteran character actor Biradar, Gururaj Hosakote and others.

Newcomer arrives

One more new movie is joining the list of movies made by newcomers. The title of the movie is RP- Black and White. The poster of the movie was released by Dr Acharya Mahamandaleshwar of Madhusudhananandapuri Mutt. In the poster, an eagle is seen flying and Lord Shiva holding a trident with his foot.

Yuvaraj S is bankrolling the movie under the DL Group and Kabbalamma Creations banners. Yuvaraj, apart from investing money, writing script, screenplay, lyrics, is directing the movie and also playing an important character. Raghavendra Prasad, a well-wisher of Yuvaraj, said the director wrote the script based on real incidents. He said the movie has a message to society on the importance of protecting the environment. "The director has included some of the incidents that happened in my life," said Prasad.

He said the process of selecting cast and crew is in progress. "As of now, child actors Nikhil R and Dakshit Gowda have been selected. Other information will be revealed soon. We planning to make this movie in Kannada, Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, and Malayalam," he said.

On his own journey

Having Shahid as elder brother is blessing, but Ishaan happy with his own identity

Ishaan Khatter is gaining recognition for his impressive performances, including his recent role in the American mystery series 'The Perfect Couple', where he starred alongside Nicole Kidman. In a recent interview, he expressed gratitude for having an elder brother like Shahid Kapoor, while emphasising that his journey is uniquely his own and not reliant on Shahid's success.

Talking to Bombay Times, Ishaan discussed his feelings about being referred to as Shahid Kapoor's brother. He recalled being asked during his first film's trailer launch at age 21 about competition with his brother, Shahid Kapoor. Ishaan views having Shahid as an elder brother as a blessing, sharing a common passion for cinema. He appreciates the opportunity to learn from Shahid but emphasises that his journey is his own, acknowledging he will always be known as the younger brother.

Khatter further emphasised his self-confidence, explaining that it stems from knowing who he is. He claimed that he is not a shadow of anyone, nor is he trying to imitate others or ride on someone else's success. He further said he is content with his identity and the path he is forging in his career.

On the professional front, Ishaan Khatter will next appear in the Netflix series 'The Royals' featuring a star-studded ensemble cast that includes Bhumi Pednekar, veteran actress Zeenat Aman, Sakshi Tanwar, Nora Fatehi, Dino Morea, Milind Soman, Chunky Panday, and Vihaam Samat, among others.

—ETimes

Kiara's Sindhi vibe

Actor Kiara Advani's latest Instagram post will leave you in splits. Giving a sneak peek into her Sindhi lifestyle, she posted a picture of "golden" toothbrush.

"Tell me you're a Sindhi without telling me you're a Sindhi," she wrote as the caption.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Kiara will be seen sharing screen space with Ram Charan in 'Game Changer'. Recently, the team of 'Game Changer' unveiled the film's teaser in Lucknow. The over one-minute-long Changer teaser shows Ram Charan going from academia to action. In the clip, he can be seen fighting goons and even romancing Kiara Advani.

Reportedly, the film is set in the world of politics and centres around the story of an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer who takes on corrupt politicians and fights for fair elections. Notably, Ram Charan attended the teaser launch event of 'Game Changer' barefoot in Lucknow. He was spotted wearing an all-black ethnic outfit - kurta, pyjama and stole.Ram Charan is following Ayyappa Deeksha, which is a vow observed by devotees of Lord Ayyappa. —ANI

What is magic?

Bollywood actress Ananya Panday has talked about what magic means to her and it involves her furry friend Riot.

Ananya's make-up artist and hairstylist took to their respective Instagram handles, where they shared a video of Ananya talking about what magic means to her. The actress is heard saying: "So to me magic is when my dog Riot looks at me with all the love in his eyes. Like I mean the whole entire world to him. That is magic to me."

Last week, Ananya spoke about the importance of taking a "step back" and being "grateful" . Ananya was talking to content creator Ankush Bahuguna on her podcast So Positive. The glimpse of the chat was uploaded on Instagram with the caption: "From chasing 10K followers to fearing it all slipping away... @ankushbahuguna gets real with @ananyapanday." In the video Ankush can be heard saying: "Biggest fear is that whatever I've accumulated, how do I protect it and how do I like to move forward and not lose it. If I ever get this lucky again in life, I'll find such a loving audience."

To which, Ananya added: "Stepping back and being grateful for how far you've come is very important and you know giving yourself a little pat on your..." — IANS

All dressed up

Priyanka Chopra is actively engaging her fans on social media, consistently sharing glimpses of her daily life. Recently, she posted pictures from a private celebration, showcasing her skill for connecting with her audience and keeping them updated on her personal moments.

In a recent multi-picture post, Priyanka was seen all dressed up for what appeared to be a pre-Christmas party. The pictures showcased her outside her apartment, which was decorated with lights and a red ribbon on the door and windows. Other photos included her posing with a friend.

The post featured a caption that expressed, "Great night with great people," accompanied by a red heart and clinking glass emoji. For the special occasion, the actress appeared stunning in a white top and matching miniskirt, accessorised with a fur jacket, a mini bag, and long boots. On Sunday, Chopra shared nostalgic behind-the-scenes pictures from the sets of 'Gunday'. —ETimes